



# NORTH KOREA



## INTRODUCTION

An independent kingdom for much of its history, following World War II, Korea was split with the northern half coming under Soviet-sponsored communist control. North Korea, under its founder President KIM Il Sung, adopted a policy of diplomatic and economic "self-reliance" as a check against outside influence. KIM Jong Il, was officially designated as his father's successor in 1980, followed in 2011 by current leader KIM Jong Un.

## GOVERNMENT

### Chief of State

State Affairs Commission President KIM Jong Un

### Head of Government

Supreme People's Assembly President CHOE Ryong Hae

### Government Type

dictatorship, single-party state; official state ideology of "Juche" or "national self-reliance"

### Capital

Pyongyang

### Legislature

unicameral Supreme People's Assembly or Ch'oe'go Inmin Hoeui (687 seats)

## GEOGRAPHY

### Area

Total: 120,538 sq km  
Land: 120,408 sq km  
Water: 130 sq km

### Climate

temperate, with rainfall concentrated in summer; long, bitter winters

### Natural Resources

coal, iron ore, limestone, magnesite, graphite, copper, zinc, lead, precious metals, hydropower

as of December 2021

## ECONOMY

### Economic Overview

one of the last centrally planned economies; hard hit by COVID-19, crop failures, international sanctions, and isolationist policies; declining growth and trade, and heavily reliant on China; poor exchange rate stability; economic data integrity issues

**GDP (Purchasing Power Parity)** \$40 billion (2015 est.)

**GDP per capita (Purchasing Power Parity)** \$1,700 (2015 est.)

**Industries** - military products, machine building, electric power, chemicals, mining (coal, iron ore, limestone, magnesite, graphite, copper, zinc, lead, precious metals), metallurgy, textiles, food processing, tourism

**Agricultural products** - rice, maize, vegetables, apples, potatoes, cabbages, fruit, sweet potatoes, beans, soybeans

**Exports** \$222 million (2018 est.)

watch components, fake hair, iron alloys, instructional models, tungsten (2019)

**partners:** China 67%, Suriname 6% (2019)

**Imports** \$2.32 billion (2018 est.)

clothing, apparel, soybean oil, rice, wheat products, clocks/watches (2019)

**partners:** China 96% (2019)

## PEOPLE & SOCIETY

### Population

25.8 million (July 2021 est.)

### Population Growth

0.49% (2021 est.)

### Ethnicity

racially homogeneous; there is a small Chinese community and a few ethnic Japanese

### Language

Korean

### Religion

traditionally Buddhist and Confucianist, some Christian and syncretic Chondogyo (Religion of the Heavenly Way)

### Urbanization

urban population: 62.6% of total population (2021)

rate of urbanization: 0.85% annual rate of change (2020-25 est.)

